



**NEXT STEP PROGRAM Handbook**  
**Verizon and CWA**  
**Current Revision: July 2007**

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## **2.1 Background**

### Introduction

Welcome to the NEXT STEP Program (“Program”). This handbook provides associates with general information about the Program. It includes several sections that address eligibility criteria, the enrollment process, company policies, and questions about the Program.

### The NEXT STEP Program Background

NEXT STEP is a groundbreaking workforce educational partnership with Verizon, the Communications Workers of America (CWA), and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW). NEXT STEP is a developmental studies Program that offers qualified Verizon associates an opportunity to earn an Associate Degree in Applied Science with a concentration in Telecommunications Technology. The Program began with a collective bargaining agreement between the CWA, the IBEW, and Verizon. Through an innovative partnership with the Lead Colleges and several community colleges within the New York and New England geographical areas (“Partner Colleges,” “Participating Colleges”) the academic Program was created. This partnership provides a progressive, competency-based educational program that will allow associates to keep pace with advancing technology, to understand changing marketplace realities and to develop and heighten customer service skills. The curriculum introduces associates to the latest technology in the telecommunications industry and provides associates with the necessary skills and knowledge to perform effectively in the competitive telecommunications environment of the future.

The Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBA) between CWA, IBEW and Verizon govern corporate-related Next Step Program issues and are the foundation for the guidelines. The exact language may be found in the 2003 NY PLANT CBA or by consulting your Union representative.

## Union - Management Educational Partnership

This partnership is the result of the 1994 bargaining agreement between Verizon, CWA, and IBEW Local 2213 and is part of the Employee Development Program section of that agreement. All parties recognize the telecommunications industry has changed dramatically over the last decade and will continue to change at an ever-increasing pace. For Verizon to meet the competitive challenge, it is important to prepare associates for the continuing changes in technology and the marketplace. The CWA, the IBEW, and Verizon agreed to provide an opportunity for qualified employees to gain the skills, knowledge, and technological expertise necessary to take them all into the future.

### Eligibility Requirements

All full-time, permanent Verizon associates who are members of the Communications Workers of America (CWA) or the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 2213 will have the opportunity to enroll in the Program. The employee must have at least 8 years of net credited service. On September 1 of the year of entrance into the Program, the employee must be in a Field Technician (FT) title, a Central Office Technician (COT) title, or qualified on the UTB-R and the Technical Minicourse (TMC)/ the appropriate qualifying corporate tests. Any job change triggered by acceptance into the Program will be in the same geographic area of the associates' current job regardless of the geographic location of the college chosen.

To be eligible for the Program, an associate must have a high school diploma or General Equivalency Degree (GED) and two years of college preparatory mathematics, or demonstrated competence in math, as defined by college requirements.

Program candidates must at least meet the minimum scores on the four sections of the ASSET evaluation OR CUNY ACT evaluation, as dictated by the college selected by the candidate, before becoming eligible for admission into the Program. Candidates must also meet all college enrollment requisites, as defined by the college's standard policies, before entering and while taking part in the Program. CUNY candidates will no longer need to take both the ASSET and the CUNY ACT tests to be candidates for the

Program, effective with the class entering the Fall 2006 semester (See 2: Enrollment Criteria).

## **2.2 Enrollment Criteria**

### Application Process and Requirements

An associate may apply for entry into the Program by registering on-line (effective with the class entering the Fall 2006 semester) or by calling a toll-free number (offered for a limited time) during one of the registration periods. The annual application period extends from October to February. The specific dates change from year to year and are announced in the registration letter mailed to all associates. The NEXT STEP Program sends out advance notice to associates about the application period by US mail to the home address of record, and may use other corporate communication medium. , The application and selection for different academic years overlap because of many time-sensitive qualifying criteria. If an associate wants to ensure consideration for each cycle, (s)he must apply regardless of where (s)he is in the on going selection procedure.

An associate must apply during the proper application period to be eligible to take the entrance test and be considered for admission into the Program. (It is essential that an associate notes and keeps his or her confirmation number for future reference. An associate can have as many as two active confirmation numbers, one for each of the overlapping cycles).

During the application period, an associate must provide his or her name, social security number, and the name of the college (s)he wants to attend. In addition, new-to-craft (NTC) associates must provide valid driver license information, including issuance and expiration dates, and select a job function(s) for which he or she wants to qualify.

The net credited service date (NCSD) drives participation in the Program's College entrance test(s). Each qualified associate invited to take the entrance tests will get a letter sent to the address of record with the examination date, time, and location.

Once an associate successfully completes the entrance test, his or her scores remain valid until the associate enters the Program. Effective with the cohort entering the Program in the Fall 2005 semester, all candidates for CUNY colleges must take and pass the CUNY ACT tests, regardless of past performance on any other test. Similarly, candidates for non-CUNY colleges must take and pass the ASSET entrance exams, regardless of past performance on the CUNY ACT tests. Effective with the Fall 2006

semester or later, CUNY candidates cannot be excused from the entrance test. All testing is by seniority within each college's pool of candidates for the respective registration period.

Those associates who do not reach the minimum score(s) for any section of the entrance test should take a development course(s) to strengthen competency in those areas. Associates testing at a non-CUNY college must take a developmental course before taking the test on the third or subsequent time for any section of the entrance test. Associates must wait for the next testing cycle to retest. Candidates for a CUNY college must check with the specific college about the compulsory remediation that is required for all CUNY candidates before any retesting.

### Entrance Test Procedures and Requirements

The entrance test evaluates a student in four basic skill areas: reading, writing, basic mathematics and elementary algebra. The evaluation is a placement tool for technical education programs nationwide.

Comparison of an associate's test results against national norms predicts if an associate has the ability necessary to perform college level work in a technical curriculum. An associate who has not met the test benchmarks may experience significant difficulty in completing the demanding courses within the Program.

Associates do not need to study for the entrance test, however the handbook section 2.6 (Entrance Test Information) has the four skill areas appearing on this evaluation for practice.

Each Partner College offers an entrance test following each application period. The colleges schedule the test date and time, normally Monday through Friday between the hours of 8 AM - 5 PM.

An invitation letter letting the associate know the date, time, and location for the entrance test goes to the home address. The first time testing, an associate takes the test during company time. The entrance test can last from 4 hours to a full day, depending on the college selected. Associates scheduled to take the test in the morning can expect they will return to work for the rest of the day. Those scheduled for the

entrance test in the afternoon will report to work in the morning and get release time to travel to the scheduled test location.

If an associate cannot take the test on the date scheduled, (s)he must call 1-800-883-2220. The Lead College will ask why the associate needs to reschedule the test date and it has the final authority to decide if there is “just cause” to warrant a change. If an associate fails to call and reschedule the entrance test date, (s)he must arrange with the partner college to take the entrance test on his or her own time. Colleges do not have to add testing sessions, therefore, if, the candidate cannot take the test at another time, during the testing cycle, (s)he is no longer eligible for the that application period.

If an associate does not plan to take the entrance test, (s)he must call 1-800-883-2220 as soon as possible after getting the invitation letter so another associate may have the opportunity to take the test. If an associate applied for the Program during that cycle, and does not get a test date, (s)he should call the Program Administrator at 1-800-883-2220. Invitations to test depend on seniority and on the pool of tested candidates, so not all associates test.

All supervisors will receive a list of associates invited to take the entrance test, so they can coordinate test dates with work schedules. The NEXT STEP staff will coordinate with the field before scheduling associates for the entrance test, and field managers will communicate this information to the associate.

On the scheduled test date, the associate must bring the letter received from the Program confirming the date and location of the test and his or her company identification card. The associate must also provide the signed “Authorization for Release of Information” form.

Associates who do not have the proper identification or do not present the “Authorization for Release of Information” form will not take the entrance test.

College policies may vary on whether to allow the use of calculators in some of the higher-level math test sections. College policy on the use of calculators prevails. Each associate needs to take the entrance test at the college that (s)he selected. The Lead College will manage any exception to ensure that no disparate treatment occurs.

Whenever possible, college staffs evaluate the entrance tests immediately after completion, so associates will receive their results before they leave the testing site. If this is not possible, the associate will receive test results in the mail at his or her home address around two weeks following the test date.

### Retaking the entrance test

An associate can retake the portions of the test not successfully completed. However, retesting will take place following the next application period in which the associate applies for the Program and has met any remediation needs. For applicants to a CUNY college, the applicant MUST complete an approved form of remediation before retesting. Each of the CUNY colleges (Bronx, Queensborough, and New York City College of Technology) defines acceptable remediation. For non-CUNY colleges, the applicant must provide proof of having taken and passed a relevant course before testing on the third time and beyond (retests). Since remediation may call for taking a full-semester class, applicants need to check with the college Program Coordinator just after testing to find out what steps to take to be eligible to retest.

An associate only needs to retake the portions for which (s) he did not meet the minimum scores. However, any associate applying to a CUNY college must take and pass the current version of the CUNY ACT test, regardless of past performance on other entrance tests. Similarly, candidates for non-CUNY colleges must take and pass the ASSET entrance exams, regardless of past performance on the CUNY ACT tests. Again, effective with the Fall 2006 semester or later, all CUNY candidates must take the entrance test regardless of the CUNY exemption policy. When an associate does not meet the minimum test scores college staff will give them a development plan that can help him or her in preparing for the entrance test. *Each eligible associate will get a letter during the next testing cycle of the location, date and time when (s) he can retake the missed part(s) of the test. The associate is responsible for completing all needed remediation and letting the college know that (s), he will take the test. If the associate misses the "reschedule dates," the associate must wait for the next testing cycle. Remediation and retesting takes place on the associate's own time.*

Each potential candidate should brush up on his or her math skills even if (s) he has reached the minimum algebra score since the Next Step curriculum is a heavily math-

based technical curriculum. As already mentioned if an associate did not achieve the needed minimum score, in algebra as well as in reading, writing, or numerical skills, there will be an opportunity to take developmental courses. Retesting would follow the next application period to qualify for the Program during that cycle. Each associate should check with the Verizon Tuition Assistance Plan to find out if tuition reimbursement is available for developmental courses. The Partner College will let each associate know which course(s) would be suitable for him or her to attend. It is the associate's responsibility to apply during the next open enrollment period and to let the college know that (s)he wants to retest. All retesting needs to be scheduled on the associates own time.

#### Authorization for Release of NEXT STEP Program Information

To take part in the NEXT STEP Program all candidates must sign an "Authorization for Release of Information" form, allowing the Partner Colleges to report specific information to Hudson Valley Community College (HVCC) for Program management purposes. This release form will also cover HVCC's reporting of summary and Program eligibility information to Verizon and the CWA. Each associate will receive this form with the invitation to take the entrance test. No associate may take the test without first surrendering this signed form. Blank copies of the form will be available at the test location for any associate who forgets to bring his or her copy. There is a copy of the Authorization for Release of Information form in section 2.5 (Resources) in this handbook.

An associate who has successfully completed the entrance test goes in a pool of eligible candidates according to seniority and by college. Each Participating College will have a pool of eligible associates for the college's area. Each associate will get a letter inviting him or her into the Program by the NEXT STEP Program office based on seniority of the currently eligible applicants for a particular college. An associate not offered a seat in the Program for the coming semester, must apply during the next application period for consideration during that academic year.

## **2.3 Program Participation**

### College Enrollment Criteria

At some point, each associate will complete the Partner College's registration paperwork, which will remain on file at the college until acceptance into the Program. During the entrance test, associates also find out about any other information the college may need, including Certificates of Residence, high school transcripts, or GED score reports, college transcripts and proof of immunizations to complete enrollment. Associates must provide the information requested since not supplying the college with the needed documentation will prevent the associate from starting in the Program.

### Certificates of Residency

When a Partner College receives partial funding from the communities they serve, all associates taking part in the NEXT STEP Program must provide a certificate of residency to their college every year. The address that appears in the official corporate records is the associate's official home address. The certificate of residence allows the Partner College to bill the home communities (within the state of NY) for the additional funds. Any associate who fails to provide a yearly certificate of residency by the college deadline and whose official address is within the state of NY will be responsible for the extra tuition costs. Verizon will not pay these costs. Failure by the candidate to pay these costs may result in the college being unable to register the associate for later semesters, withholding of transcripts and degrees, and separation from the Program.

An associate needs to be aware the colleges can demand payment of the disputed funds even if (s)he is no longer a participant in the Program.

### Class Locations

The Program has partnerships with 15 colleges in the New York area. All classes take place on these college campuses, except for Distance Learning classes. Each student may attend the college of his or her choice, however as described in the Verizon and CWA letter of agreement, associates will not receive DTA (daily travel allowance) to travel to and from college locations. (A list of Partner Colleges is in Section 2.5 of this handbook). The associate lock-in the college choice at registration for first semester after acceptance.

## Class Schedules

Classes take place Monday through Friday during company time usually the same day each week for an eight-hour day and run for 15 weeks each semester. (During the first semester there is an extra day scheduled before the start of the semester for an orientation. There may also be an extra half -day scheduled during the eighth and final semester for a graduation recognition event). Each semester the associate will attend two courses from the Associate Degree in Applied Science Telecommunications Technology: Verizon curriculum. Associates must take the courses on the day offered. If on acceptance to the Program an associate finds that (s)he cannot attend classes on that day, (s)he must call 1-800-883-2220 to have his or her name removed from the roster. Please remember that an associate must apply for the next selection cycle to be eligible for that cycle.

The Partner Colleges advise associates, as early as possible, before the start of the semester, through the [www.nspinfo.com](http://www.nspinfo.com) web site or through the college Program Coordinator, of the dates and locations for that semester's classes. The Partner Colleges register only those associates listed in the official roster. Only the Lead College may add to the roster so if there are any problems the associate should call 1-800-883-2220 to resolve the issue. The NEXT STEP Lead College provides the approved roster to Verizon, listing associates in the Program at the start of each semester. The notice also references the web site for the class schedule and any schedule adjustments for each Partner College so managers can adjust work assignments.

## Course Requirements

To graduate with an Associate Degree in Applied Science-Telecommunications Technology: Verizon, the associate must successfully complete sixteen courses, for sixty credit hours. An associate must attend the courses in a fixed sequence. All courses must meet Program curriculum requirements. Each semester the associate will attend two courses for 15 weeks. There will be no classes scheduled during July and August.

A Program participant earns a degree by successfully completing all course and college requirements as defined by the college that he or she attends, usually after completing four years of study. A Program participant must have a 2.0 Grade Point Average (GPA) to graduate and receive the college degree.

### Transfer Credit Policies and Options

Beyond specific Next Step Program (NSP) policy limits, the decision to grant or not grant transfer credit for previous college coursework is the academic decision of the individual colleges. Appendix 2 contains each college's policy for transfer of credit. . All colleges follow the Program policy, at a minimum, but may impose policies that are more rigorous.

#### *Program Policy*

Students can receive transfer credits, based on the college transfer policy, except for those "nonwaivable" courses set by the NSP. Effective Fall 2005 new participants may receive transfer credit for no more than four Program courses, consistent with the college's general transfer credit policies. The associate selects the courses for transfer of credit, during the first semester, in consultation with the college's NSP Coordinator. This is not negotiable. Since the normal policy at each college will apply, specific course details may vary from one college to the next. It is the student's responsibility to apply for transfer of credit, as covered during the Next Step orientation session. The application (for transfer of credit) begins once the student has provided an official transcript to the chosen college. The process must be completed before the end of the first semester.

The curriculum teams continually review, and revise the NSP courses to stay current with changing technologies and industry needs. As a result, course content and course sequences may change through time. These changes could have an impact on those associates who need to step away from the academic sequence and then wish to reenter the Program. If a student receives transfer credit for a course or has completed a course, and the content has later significantly changed, that student may need to take some courses on his her own time before rejoining the Program. The Lead College and

the associate's college, working with the Program Co-Directors make the final determination.

Once a student enters the Program (s)he cannot take extra courses outside normal scheduled class hours and apply for transfer credit for use in the Program curriculum.

"No Transfer Courses" (Nonwaivable)

The Program does not allow transfer of credit for the first semester courses as well as the four telecommunications courses since these will cover the latest technologies.

In addition, students must take the social science (Labor History) capstone course that applies technologies and competencies learned in the Program to the workplace. These courses take place on company time during normally scheduled Program class days.

Credit for Both courses in a Semester

A student who has credit for both courses in a given semester is a student with advanced standing. Students with advanced standing status can move to the more advanced group to take the next NSP courses needed. They need to meet certain conditions: the college has a cohort for the course, it has seats available to house the student, and the student meets course prerequisites. Alternatively, (s)he may choose to return to work for that semester and rejoin his or her group for the next courses in the sequence.

Credit for one course in a Semester

There are two choices for a student who has transfer credit for only one course. (S)he can either audit the transferred credit course, or report to work for that portion of the day. The student should consider his/ her choice since there are college registration deadlines that could void any change in the choice made.

1. (Where auditing is a college alternative) If a student chooses to audit, (s)he must take part in all course activities and must complete all course assignments except the final exam. The college is the final arbiter of the associate's auditing responsibilities. The college has the right to refuse participation to any associate who becomes disruptive or does not comply with the instructors' academic standards. Removal from an audited class will result in the associate's separation from the Program.

2. If (s)he chooses to return to work, this must comply with Verizon guidelines for the specific portion of the day that encompasses the waived course. The associate is responsible for working out with his or her supervisor travel time and job assignment. The Lead College will let the appropriate corporate representative know the associate will be back at work for part of the work tour.

It is important to remember that NSP courses with their specialized content are not equivalent to similar courses they might have taken in the past. Skills and knowledge related to Blackboard, NSP e-mail, other specific computer applications, and Verizon umbrella competencies appear throughout all NSP courses. Therefore, associates should carefully choose courses when seeking transfer credit since the choice may affect student performance and grades in later courses.

### Grade Point Average (GPA)

Students in the Program must comply with the standard college policy on academic standing and GPA. Policies may vary from one college to the next. Each participating college publishes these guidelines in their catalog. Each student will receive a copy of the college handbook for his or her Partner College from the Program Coordinator at his or her school. Successful completion of each course is a Program requirement. Colleges are responsible for providing timely intervention and support to a student when it is determined that (s)he is in jeopardy of achieving the overall 2.0 GPA required for graduation.

### Not Maintaining Required GPA

The college under the normal college process may terminate a student who falls below the required GPA. In addition, the NSP may remove a student when the GPA falls below that college requirement or if it becomes mathematically impossible for the student to reach a GPA of 2.0 or better needed to graduate.

### Incomplete Courses

Next Step Program students must complete all required course work. Any “incomplete” course grade must comply with the college policy and will be given only in hardship or emergency conditions. To remain eligible to continue in the Program, a student must

resolve all incomplete courses within 30 days of the end of the semester at the college, or by the start of the next semester, whichever occurs first,

### Failed Courses

Failure of any course is serious and usually is cause for dismissal from the Program. An Associate who fails a prerequisite course scheduled for the next semester may not continue in the Program. The associate will move to the Field Technician or Central Office Technician occupational classification, job, and pension band, according to the job assignment performed while a TTA. For courses that are not a prerequisite for another course, the following applies:

An associate who receives a failing grade in the Program must make up the course on his or her own time. He or she must receive a passing grade, before graduation and may continue in the Program. Courses that fall into this category for classes graduating in the Spring 2009 or earlier semester are Physics and English 2. The course that falls into this category for those graduating in the Spring 2010 semester or later is English 2.

The associate will have to make up the course sooner if it is a precondition for another course. If an associate receives a failing grade for English 1, they must take and pass the course before taking English 2 in the seventh semester.

The associate may not take any of these courses through the Tuition Assistant Plan. If an associate is having difficulty with a course or is struggling to keep up with the predetermined academic requirements, (s) he should seek help. Extra help is available from various avenues such as, peer tutors, college resource center, the college instructor, a private tutor or by speaking with the Program Coordinator at the Partner College. Note: The Program does not cover the cost of private tutors.

### Transfers to Other NEXT STEP Program Colleges

During the application period, an associate may only select one college, but may change the selected college as long as the application period is still open. The associate locks in the college choice at the end of the application period for the academic year they register. After completing one full semester, an associate may ask to attend a different college. (S)he must meet the normal college transfer policies

(transfer to the CUNY colleges might mean taking the CUNY ACT test), and be eligible at the new college based on net credited service date. The Lead College will evaluate the impact of the transfer on the colleges under consideration. The same cohort must exist at the new college and must have seats available. The Lead College could deny the transfer if it were to affect either the college or the Program negatively. The Program denies a college transfer to an associate whose credits are not transferable. Associates should submit the college transfer request, in writing, to HVCC thirty days before the start of the next semester. These requests go to Marcia Malone's E-mail address: [malonmar@hvcc.edu](mailto:malonmar@hvcc.edu) or fax: 518-629-7543.

### Program Costs

The Lead College, through its agreement with Verizon pays the Partner Colleges for sanctioned Program costs. Each college will bill Hudson Valley Community College for these expenses. Students should not pay for any Program-related items directly, nor should they buy educational materials out-of-pocket.

The NEXT STEP Program pays for tuition costs including registration fees, laboratory fees, graduation fees and other mandatory fees charged to the normal student population at Participating Colleges. The Lead College orders and delivers most textbooks and workbooks to the Participating Colleges. (Associates can keep textbooks for personal use; however, they cannot sell them.) The Lead College will recycle surplus books to future Program participants whenever possible. A student withdrawing from the Program while a semester is in session must return the books assigned for that semester.

### Program Costs Not Covered By The Program

Associates will be responsible for the college expenses incurred when they fail to comply with college policies, including submission of certificates of residency, where applicable; immunization; campus traffic violations; library late fees, etc. Under no circumstances will Verizon pay for expenses related to the failure of a student to provide a certificate of residency when required by the college.

Verizon associates need to purchase personal supplies, such as notebooks, paper, pens, pencils, and computer diskettes. Verizon will not reimburse for these expenses. Associates are responsible to pay for any private tutoring they may need.

### Computers/Calculators

Each NEXT STEP Program student will be loaned a laptop computer and calculator during his or her participation in the Program. Each college will give out computers and calculators to the Program students during the first semester. Each student must sign Equipment Custody Forms, which identify the individual and the serial number of the assigned computer and calculator, to be used for tracking purposes. The computer and calculator are Program property and provided for the use of the student while enrolled in the Program.

Students are responsible for the care and safety of their computers and calculators. They are also responsible for reporting any problems or theft of computers or calculators to the college Program Coordinator immediately. In addition, any loss of computer because of fire, theft or any other personal catastrophic event requires a police report. Students are responsible for the repair or replacement of their assigned laptop computer when damaged because of abuse or negligence or if the repair falls outside the scope of the warranty.

HVCC and the Participating College will review all requests for replacement equipment and supporting documentation. Upon approval, the student will be provided with a replacement calculator or computer. Replacement computers may be equivalent or older than the broken one, depending on available inventory,

The Lead College reserves the right to reject any requests for replacement calculators and computers when it gets inadequate documentation or it concludes the student has excessively abused the equipment.

If an associate leaves the Program for any reason, (s)he must return assigned books (for the current semester), computers, software, calculators and equipment to the respective college. In rare cases, with prior approval of the NEXT STEP office, he or she may return the items to the associate's supervisor.

The Program has a procedure in place to recover computers and calculators from any associate who leaves the Program without returning the laptop assigned to him or her. If those procedures fail to get the items back, the associate's case goes to a collection agency. The agency pursues indemnification of the Program cost of the computer and associated collection costs.

### Access To The Virtual Community

Next Step uses Blackboard and e-mail to create a virtual learning community to supplement classroom work. Blackboard is a class management program that is widely used throughout higher education. The Next Step colleges use it to link students, college faculty, and Program administrators, to extend the boundaries of the classroom beyond the individual campuses, allowing students and faculty to collaborate on class work and projects in out-of-class time. The Next Step community also uses its own e-mail system to integrate students, college faculty, and Program administrators.

Access to the corporate network is optional at the request of the student and intended to provide internet access for those students who do not have or choose not to use their own Internet Service Provider (ISP).

### Secure ID Process

The Verizon Security Department requires that all employees and/or approved agents who wish to access the Verizon network remotely must have a SecurID card. If an associate chooses to use the Verizon network as his or her ISP to access the NSP Virtual community, the associate's organization will allow access and provide the SecurID card. It is the associates' responsibility to complete the card activation and get the supervisor's permission. Upon activation of the SecurID, the associate may go to <http://helpdesk.verizon.com> and follow instructions or use the **813-978-2828** number for help. Using this number the associate can find out if the card is active as well as get help with IPRS issues such as pin resets, dialer problems, "authentication failure" error messages, etc. If the associate chooses to call the helpdesk (s)he needs to be aware that at peak times the hold time can be lengthy. It is the associate's responsibility to troubleshoot his or her IPRS issues.

### Campus Facilities

Program students have full access to their college campus facilities, as described in each college's handbook.

### Student Complaint Procedures

Each participating college has procedures for handling student complaints, as outlined in their catalog or handbook. The college catalog is the college specific set of requirements. If a complaint is academic, rather than Program specific, the student must follow normal college procedures as described in the college catalog. For problems specific to the Program, the student should contact the College Coordinator. (See section 2.5 Resource for reach numbers).

## **2.4 Company and Program Policies**

### Compensation

Attendance at the college/university shall be treated as a workday.

The title upgrade for Field Technicians and Central Office Technicians to Telecommunication Technical Associate and the new pay treatment will be effective the first day of the week (Sunday) in which the employee is scheduled to begin college classes. New to Craft associates title upgrade is effective the first day of the week (Sunday) in which the employee is scheduled to begin the pre-university assignment. . At this time, the employees' wages move to the maximum weekly wage rate of a Field Technician/Central Office Technician salary.

### Reimbursement Agreement

During Program offers, associates need to sign a reimbursement agreement. It requires associates to repay Verizon for the Next Step tuition costs if (s)he voluntarily leaves employment of the Company within 2 years after completion of the Program. Associates cannot enter the Program without this signed agreement. Repayment does not apply when the associate retires with a service pension.

### Job Requirements

An associate must meet the basic qualifications for the job duties for the TTA title. Since TTAs may be assigned to jobs including both inside and outside responsibilities, DOT medical examinations, working a loft or pole climbing, pole climbing with hooks, (as defined by geographic area), driver licenses, and other company tests may be required.

### Job Functions and Reporting Locations

The following provisions are in the CWA/Verizon contract about associates who are "new to craft" (NTC). (The contract defines NTC as those associates who wish to enter the Program and are not in the Field or Central Office Technician job classifications before entering the Program). The NTC must move to either the Field Technician or the Central Office Technician job functions once (s)he fully qualifies and before classes start. The initial period known as the preuniversity assignment starts approximately six months before starting college classes. On occasion, the preuniversity assignments

might exceed the six-month benchmark (up to one year) because of college start up schedules.

The preuniversity assignment provides an opportunity for basic corporate and on-the-job training before the associate begins course work in the degree program coincident with the start of the academic calendar. Retreat rights for, the company and the associate, will apply during the preuniversity assignment.

Employees (NTC), whose current work location is in Upstate New York, the employee will select a work location, by seniority, as offered by the Non-surplus transfer letter. Employees (NTC) whose current work location is in Downstate New York (Westchester and South), will select a work location as offered by the company in a plant organization within the UTP area.

All associates in the Program will meet the basic qualifications for the job duties assigned. If an associate fails to meet the basic qualifications for the job duties while enrolled in the Program, he or she will return to his or her former job title, pension band and work location.

### Benefits

All applicable benefit plans and programs currently in effect under the 1994 Memorandum of Understanding, including Workers Compensation coverage, will apply to an associate's attendance in the Program.

### Upgrade and Transfer Process

TTAs will not be eligible to take part in the SPV process or Article 36, Inter-area Transfer Requests, for 36 months from the date upgraded to TTA title. TTAs will be included with the classification they are assigned to (COT and FT) for Article 8 moves within their Article 8 unit.

After 36 months in title, TTAs can take part in the SPV process, and may bid for COT and FT vacancies regardless of their current occupational classification assignment.

After 36 months in tile, TTAs will be included with the occupational classification assigned to (COT or FT) for Article 8 and Article 36 transfers, subject to all requirements and conditions of those articles.

### Seniority

Before receiving the TTA title and assignment to a work location, associates (NTC) will be offered job opportunities by seniority within a UTP area.

### Daily Travel Allowance

No student will receive a daily travel allowance for the one day a week that they travel to college while attending classes (Clarification: this includes travel to and from testing locations, Program orientation, and graduation events).

### Board and Lodging

No student will receive board or lodging expenses to attend the Program.

### Program Attendance

Class attendance for the Program is a normal workday, paid at straight time under the collective bargaining agreement. It is not intended to prejudice or provide windfalls for an associate, because of an unintentional or peculiar application of the collective bargaining agreement.

As with any other day of work, associates must report to the work location assigned. While attending the Program, students must attend class when scheduled. Students must let their supervisor and the Program Coordinator at their assigned college know if they are unable to attend a class for any reason. Only Verizon management can approve an absence under company policies and guidelines.

It is the responsibility of the individual student to gain approval from the faculty to make up any course work because of his or her approved absence. Where the college has defined more strict rules to this policy those rules apply.

Effective with the start of the Spring 2007 semester the Student Handbook includes the college-specific attendance policies as well as a clarification on the Program implications of missing classes. As a student of the college, an associate must follow the college-specific attendance policy. The full text for all college-specific attendance policies can be found under “Classes, Schedules & Policies” ... “NY College Attendance Policies”.

### Attendance at the Start of the Semester

Special Condition 1: Applies to returning students who are not on disability.

If that student is absent from the first two classes and has not arranged with the assigned Faculty to keep up with the work, (s)he will be withdrawn from all semester classes and will be retreated from the Program.

Special Condition 2: Applies to new students who do not have the TTA title.

An associate who is on disability becomes ineligible and needs to register during a future enrollment period for Program consideration.

Special Condition 3: Applies to students who have the TTA title.

When an associate is on disability at the start of the semester he or she is withdrawn without prejudice and is eligible to restart in the next available semester after returning to a full day of work .

### Shifted Tour

Shifted tour provisions do not apply to a student’s college attendance. Assignments to those tours continue, as they have in the past. On the day they attend class, their work shift must be 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM.

### Night Tours

Enrollment in the Program does not remove associates from night tours unless their Program participation interferes with their ability to work night tours on workdays when they do not attend class.

## Overtime

TTAs are integrated into current overtime procedures; however, during the period of cross-training (inside/outside), employees may not be qualified to perform all overtime work or because of specific cross-training obligations may not be available to work overtime.

## Vacation Days

Associates who take vacation on a scheduled college day do NOT get additional time off to attend college since the college program happens on specific days each semester. If an employee misses class, it is his or her responsibility to make up the course work on his or her own time. (Clarification: this does not override the particular attendance policy of the college; it just provides explanation of corporate treatment)

If an employee attends class during a scheduled vacation week, the employee will be granted another vacation day.

## Holidays

If the college holds class on a designated (Article 24) holiday and the employee chooses to attend, the employee will be granted another day off with pay. The day off may be taken that week or within the following three weeks instead of the Article 24 holiday.

There will be times when the school will not hold class on the normally scheduled day because of designated school holidays. On these occasions, employees will report to their normal work location. In addition, employees may be required to attend class on a different day than normally scheduled due to school-designated holidays. Associates need to let their supervisors know of any changes in the class schedule as far in advance as possible. The changes to the class schedule appear on the Program website under the schedule section.

## Cancellation of Classes

If it is necessary for the college to cancel a class, the colleges' normal class cancellation policy will apply. In cases of class cancellations, employees must report to their

assigned work location. Most colleges have emergency closing information on their website. Associates can also check the Program website nspinfo.com for updates.

## Separation from the Next Step Program Process and Requirements

### Temporary Separation from the Next Step Program

#### Corporate Leave of Absence

Any NSP participant granted a corporate leave of absence has an automatic leave from the Program. The associate, with the corporate leave, is responsible for notifying the Lead College to make sure the appropriate documentation of the temporary leave is made. The associate must return all materials as if he or she were permanently leaving the Program.

An associate returning from a corporate leave of absence and seeking to return to the Program needs to know the timing of his or her return to the Program will vary. It will depend on the number of openings available, duration since the associate last attended classes, courses cycle, and courses needed by the associate.

#### *Disability*

An associate, who is absent from work, on disability, may not go to school on his or her assigned day. If an associate attends school while out on disability (s)he is in violation of company policy. This violation may result in disciplinary action that might include termination from the Program and loss of benefits.

Hudson Valley CC will inform the Partner College Program Coordinator and the associate (via US mail to the home address of record) once Verizon has confirmed the associate is ready to return to classes. An associate who is returning from a disability must be working a full day tour to return to NEXT STEP Program classes

#### *Suspension*

Any associate suspended from work cannot attend scheduled NEXT STEP Program classes during his or her period of suspension. It is the responsibility of the individual student to make up any course work because of his or her absence.

### *NEXT STEP Program Leave of Absence*

Any Verizon associate wishing to take a leave of absence from the Program must contact the Program Co-Directors to request the leave. The request must be documented and the associate must continue to attend classes until told of a decision. If the leave is granted, the associate must return all materials as if he or she were permanently leaving the Program.

The Program grants a leave of absence for a specific period and the associate must return to the Program at the end of that period. An associate who does not return will be treated as if (s)he had requested a retreat from the Program and must appeal if (s)he wishes to re-enter the Program later.

Hudson Valley Community College will coordinate all such requests with the Co-Directors and the Partner College.

### *Permanent Separation from the Next Step Program*

There are several ways to be permanently separated from the Program. This section will cover those conditions. It will be followed by an outline of the steps necessary to appeal for re-entry.

To withdraw properly from the Program an associate must:

- discuss the circumstances of the withdrawal with the union Co-Director when possible
- notify the Partner College Program Coordinator
- complete a Next Step Program Withdrawal Form
- follow the Partner College's standard procedures for withdrawing from a degree Program
- return his or her laptop computer, calculator, and textbooks for the current semester to the Program Coordinator at the Partner College within 48 hours

It is very important that an associate follow the college's standard procedures for withdrawing from a degree program and follow the documented NSP procedure of notifying the college Program Coordinator of the intent to withdraw. Failure to follow procedures will affect future considerations for appeal to re-enter the Program.

### *Student Initiated Withdrawal from Program*

An associate may withdraw from the Program at any time and for any reason. If an associate drops out of the Program, the associate must retreat to his or her previous title, and cannot take part in any SPV consideration for one year from the retreat date. The associate must complete the withdrawal processes (Program and College withdrawals).

### *Academically Ineligible*

An associate who is required to leave the NEXT STEP Program due to academic ineligibility must complete the withdrawal process. The associate is responsible for any college appeal regarding a specific grade or not meeting the overall GPA requirements defined in the college's normal appeal process.

In the case of a "not meeting GPA," appeal, the college may grant the appeal and the student may be re-instated at the college. However, NSP administration reserves the right to review the college re-instatement decision. The NSP administration can determine if the student does not meet the Program requirements as described in the CWA/Verizon labor contract (to be eligible to take part in the Program) and not allow the student to continue. The Program review is the responsibility of Lead College personnel, the Program Coordinator from the participating college, and the Program Co-Directors from Verizon and CWA.

### *Company Ineligible*

An associate who must leave the NEXT STEP Program due to company ineligibility needs to complete the withdrawal processes.

### *Termination/Resignation/Retirement*

Any associate who is terminated, resigns, or retires from Verizon may not attend NEXT STEP Program classes. The associate must return all Program materials before leaving the company. NOTE: It is very important that a student follow the college's standard procedures for withdrawing from a degree program. Failure to follow procedures will affect future college enrollment.

### Appeal Process to Reenter the Program

When initiating an appeal for reinstatement into the Program, an associate must meet all the criteria outlined below (as they apply). Completing and meeting all requirements does not guarantee reinstatement into the Program. Once the Lead College and Program staff has the documentation they investigate and prepare the appeal recommendation regarding readmission. The NSP Co-Directors review the information and make a determination on the request. The Lead College lets the associate know the outcome as well as any relevant information he or she needs.

- The associate must apply during the appropriate application period(s) to self-nominate for the NEXT STEP Program
- When contacted, the associate needs to document the reason he or she should be reinstated. If applicable, the documentation should include supporting documentation that he or she wants considered, as part of the application or that will prove the reason for company ineligibility is no longer valid.
- The associate must prove that he or she passed the course work from the semester in which he or she dropped out, was removed, or became academically ineligible. Note: An associate must complete these courses on his or her own time.
- The associate must provide documentation from the Partner College that the make up work satisfies the NSP degree requirements. (This could require more than one course)
- The associate must submit a Next Step Reimbursement Agreement and Authorization for Release of Information Form, if not already on file.
- The associate must submit proof that he or she returned the laptop computer, calculator, and textbooks to the Program Coordinator at the Partner College within 48 hours of having left the Program

## 2.5 Resources

### Courses Required for Associate Degree In Telecommunications Technology: Verizon

The NEXT STEP Program courses address three areas of skills and knowledge, general education, electricity/electronics and telecommunications. The courses are listed below in the sequence that they will be offered:

| Semester    | Old Course Sequence  | New Course Sequence                                     |
|-------------|--|---|
|             | For S09 and earlier cohorts. Also for consideration when reviewing re-entry into the Program | (Effective Fall '06 for the S10 and subsequent cohorts) |
| <u>I</u>    | Technical Math **I   | Technical Math I **                                     |
|             | Computer Applications**  | Computer Applications **                                |
| <u>II</u>   | English I  | English I   |
|             | Electrical Circuits  | Digital Systems for Telecommunications I                |
| <u>III</u>  | Technical Math II  | Technical Math II                                       |
|             | Electronics I  | Digital Systems for Telecommunications 2                |
| <u>IV</u>   | Physics  | Physics   |
|             | Electronics II   | Electrical Circuits                                     |
| <u>V</u>    | Digital Electronics I  | Introduction to Electronics                             |
|             | Telecommunications I: Intro. To Voice & Data**   | Telecommunications I **                                 |
| <u>VI</u>   | Digital Electronics II   | Electronic Communications                               |
|             | Telecommunications II: Data Communications**   | Telecommunication II **                                 |
| <u>VII</u>  | English II   | English II  |
|             | Telecommunications III: LANS and WANS**  | Telecommunications III**                                |
| <u>VIII</u> | Social Science**   | Labor History **  |
|             | Telecommunications IV: Advanced Topics**   | Telecommunications IV**                                 |

Semesters in red indicate a change in sequence has occurred

\*\* These courses cannot be waived.

NOTE: The exact title of courses may vary from one college to the next

## Participating Colleges and College Coordinators - New York

| <b>NY Colleges</b>                  | <b>Program Coordinator</b> | <b>Coordinator Telephone</b> | <b>Coordinator E-mail</b>  |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|--|
| Bronx Community College             | Jalil Moghaddassi          | 718 289 5373                 | <a href="mailto:jalil.moghaddassi@bcc.cuny.edu">jalil.moghaddassi@bcc.cuny.edu</a>     |
| Broome Community College            | Bina Paramasivaiah         | 607 778 5039                 | <a href="mailto:paramasivaia@mail.sunybroome.edu">paramasivaia@mail.sunybroome.edu</a> |
| Suny Canton Community College       | Stephen Frempong           | 315 386 7211                 | <a href="mailto:frempongs@canton.edu">frempongs@canton.edu</a>                         |
| Clinton Community College           | Al Cordes                  | 518 562 4331                 | <a href="mailto:cordalbe@nspinfo.com">cordalbe@nspinfo.com</a>                         |
| Dutchess Community College          | Ellena Reda                | 845 431 8559                 | <a href="mailto:reda@sunydutchess.edu">reda@sunydutchess.edu</a>                       |
| Erie Community College              | Jim Stranz                 | 716 851 1737                 | <a href="mailto:stranz@ecc.edu">stranz@ecc.edu</a>                                     |
| Hudson Valley Community College     | Margaret Geehan            | 518 629 7622                 | <a href="mailto:geehamar@hvcc.edu">geehamar@hvcc.edu</a>                               |
| Mohawk Valley Community College     | Jude Toukatley             | 315 731 5752                 | <a href="mailto:jtoukatly@mvcc.edu">jtoukatly@mvcc.edu</a>                             |
| Nassau Community College            | Paula Settaducatti         | 516 572 7699                 | <a href="mailto:settapd@sunynassau.edu">settapd@sunynassau.edu</a>                     |
| New York City College of Technology | Mohammad Kouar             | 718 260 5316                 | <a href="mailto:mkouar@citytech.cuny.edu">mkouar@citytech.cuny.edu</a>                 |
| New York Institute of Technology    | Ludmilla Amanni            | 212 261 1714                 | <a href="mailto:lamani@nyit.edu">lamani@nyit.edu</a>                                   |
| Onondaga Community College          | Ron Hinshaw                | 315 498 2452                 | <a href="mailto:hinshawr@mail.sunyocc.edu">hinshawr@mail.sunyocc.edu</a>               |
| Queensborough Community College     | Stuart Asser               | 718 631 6207                 | <a href="mailto:SAsser@qcc.edu">SAsser@qcc.edu</a>                                     |
| Suffolk Community College           | Pete Maritato              | 631 451 4277                 | <a href="mailto:maripete@nspinfo.com">maripete@nspinfo.com</a>                         |
| Watertown Distance Learning         | Joe Barrile                | 716 851 1736                 | <a href="mailto:barrilejg@ecc.edu">barrilejg@ecc.edu</a>                               |
| Westchester Community College       | Steve Leone                | 914 606 6658                 | <a href="mailto:steve.leone@sunywcc.edu">steve.leone@sunywcc.edu</a>                   |

Next Step Program Team

Co-Director (Verizon)  
210 West 18<sup>th</sup> St.  
16<sup>th</sup> Floor  
NY, NY 10011

Donato (Danny) Crocitto

| Telephone    | Lotus Notes     | E-mail   |
|--------------|-----------------|--|
| 212.620.6048 | Donato Crocitto | <a href="mailto:donato.p.crocitto@verizon.com">donato.p.crocitto@verizon.com</a> |

Co-Director (CWA)  
345 Westchester Ave  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Portchester, NY 10573

Thomas (Scotty) Cairney

| Telephone    | Lotus Notes    | E-mail   |
|--------------|----------------|--|
| 914.934.9713 | Thomas Cairney | <a href="mailto:tfcairney@aol.com">tfcairney@aol.com</a> |

Senior Consultant-New York State  
80 Vandenberg Avenue- HRC 520  
Troy, NY 12180

Sue Lopez

| Telephone    | Lotus Notes | E-mail   |
|--------------|-------------|--|
| 518.629.8154 | Sue Lopez   | <a href="mailto:susana.y.lopez@verizon.com">susana.y.lopez@verizon.com</a> |

Senior Consultant -New England States Elaine Gallivan  
280 Locke Drive  
3rd Floor  
Marlborough, MA 01752

| Telephone    | Lotus Notes        | E-mail   |
|--------------|--------------------|--|
| 508.460.4597 | Elaine J. Gallivan | <a href="mailto:elaine.j.gallivan@verizon.com">elaine.j.gallivan@verizon.com</a> |

Lead School (Academic Administration/General Information)  
Hudson Valley Community College  
80 Vandenberg Avenue- HRC 520  
Troy, NY 12180

| Telephone    | Name                 | E-mail   |
|--------------|----------------------|--|
| 800.883.2220 | HVCC Next Step Staff | <a href="mailto:info@nspinfo.com">info@nspinfo.com</a> |

Authorization For Release of Information

NEXT STEP Program

For Verizon employees participating in the NEXT STEP Program:

I hereby authorize NEXT STEP Program consortium colleges to release information concerning my name, Social Security Number, and academic standing, including grades, during my participation in the NEXT STEP Program to the Hudson Valley Community College NEXT STEP Program office and to other NEXT STEP Program consortium colleges, as required. I understand that HVCC will report to CWA and Verizon my Program eligibility, based on the qualifying test(s), acceptance into the NEXT STEP Program and a list of the NEXT STEP Program courses that are waived due to approval of transfer credit for me. In addition, HVCC will inform the Co-Directors of the Program if I am terminated from the Program due to failure to meet the academic standards of the college in which I am enrolled or if I inform HVCC that I intend to withdraw from the NEXT STEP Program.

I further understand that additional information may be provided from HVCC to CWA and Verizon and that such information will be in summary form that does not identify a specific student in the NEXT STEP Program.

|                    |
|--------------------|
| Print Name:        |
| Signature:         |
| Date:              |
| Social security #: |

Reimbursement Agreement Letter

**NEXT STEP PROGRAM**  
**REIMBURSEMENT AGREEMENT**

As a condition of participating in the Next Step Program (“the Program”), I understand and agree to the following:

1. I agree to reimburse Verizon in full for the total cost of tuition which is being paid on my behalf for my participation in the Program, if I voluntarily leave the employment of Verizon during the two years following completion of the Program for any reason other than retiring with a service pension.

Name: (Print) \_\_\_\_\_ Social Security # \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Manager’s Verification: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Transfer Credit Response Form

Please indicate your choice for the course you have transfer credit for by placing a ✓ on the appropriate line. Complete the rest of the form and submit it to your Program Coordinator by the required response date. Thank you.

\_\_\_\_\_ I choose to report to work during the time that this class is scheduled (your supervisor must approve this)

\_\_\_\_\_ I choose to audit this class and will abide by the audit policies of the college and the consortium for the Verizon NEXT STEP PROGRAM:

- o Attend **ALL** classes **on time**
- o Complete **ALL** assignments, homework, and group projects as assigned by the instructor
- o YOU **DO NOT** have to take tests, midterms, or finals
- o YOU **WILL NOT** receive a grade at the end of the course

(Fill out the enclosed audit form and return with this form)

|                   |                    |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| Print Name:       | Social security #: |
| Course/Section #: | Date:              |
| Signature:        |                    |

Please return this form by the date requested. Remember to complete and enclose the Audit Form, if applicable.

**NEXT STEP: transfer credit choice**

Program Withdrawal/Retreats and Receipt For Return Of Program Supplies

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Program Entry Date \_\_\_\_\_

SS # \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

College \_\_\_\_\_ Responsibility Code \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ has dropped the Next Step Program courses for the current semester and withdrawn from the Next Step Program.

\_\_\_\_\_ has returned the computer, associated documentation and related equipment, calculator and textbooks for the current semester .

\_\_\_\_\_ has completed the college's normal withdrawal procedures.

Computer returned Model \_\_\_\_\_ Serial #: \_\_\_\_\_

Calculator returned Model \_\_\_\_\_ Serial #: \_\_\_\_\_

Current semester textbooks returned

College withdrawal procedures completed

Date of Last Class Attended \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for Withdrawing/Retreating (check all that apply):

Academic - other (see comments)

Medical - disability

Academic ineligibility

Medical - other

Not prepared for new work assignment

Medical - family illness

Personal reasons

Academic - personal

Promoted to management position

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**Comments (use reverse side, if needed):**

Signature \_\_\_\_\_  
Student

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_  
Program Coordinator

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**\*\* The participating college must forward a copy of this form to Hudson Valley Community College \*\***

About [www.nspinfo.com](http://www.nspinfo.com)

The Next Step Program website, [www.nspinfo.com](http://www.nspinfo.com), is a resource for new and prospective students, college faculty, and Verizon supervisors and managers.

Included among its features are:

Bulletins with up-to-the-minute Program news such as class cancellations, rescheduling

On-line candidate registration (Secure Site)

Next Step policies and procedures

Class schedules

Student and supervisor handbooks

Blackboard - Link to the learning community for all colleges (Secure Site)

Ask Gus (Secure Site)

Links to other, related sites

E-mail system for the Program (Secure Site)

## **2.6 Information on the Entrance Tests and Preparation Courses**

### What is ASSET?

The ASSET evaluation program is a series of short placement tests developed by American College Testing (ACT) that lets an associate and the schoolwork together to help in a successful educational program. ASSET helps identify strengths as well as the knowledge and skills needed in order to succeed in the Program.

### How Does ASSET Work?

ASSET, as used in NEXT STEP, has four tests of basic skills in writing, reading, numerical reasoning, and elementary algebra. ASSET scores indicate areas in which an associate is strong and areas in which he or she may need help. Thus, ASSET can identify problems in major subject areas before they disrupt the educational progress, giving the learner the opportunity to prepare more effectively for needed courses.

### ASSET Scoring

The maximum possible score on any segment of the ASSET is 55. The lowest possible score is 23. The following are the minimum acceptable performance levels for the Program.

|         |    |                    |    |
|---------|----|--------------------|----|
| Writing | 35 | Numerical Skills   | 34 |
| Reading | 34 | Elementary Algebra | 34 |

### How Are ASSET Scores Used?

An associate must achieve a minimum score on ASSET for eligibility to the Program at any non-CUNY college to which he or she applies. Seniority is also an important factor in determining who gets the opportunity to test to qualify for the Program in any enrollment period.

### What is CUNY ACT?

The ACT is America's most widely accepted college entrance exam. It assesses students' general educational development and their ability to complete college-level work. The multiple-choice tests cover four skill areas: English, mathematics, reading, and science. The Writing Test, measures skill in planning and writing a short essay.

### How Does CUNY/ACT Work?

CUNY requires its students to be proficient in reading, writing, and mathematics. To this end, it assesses the skills levels of applicants to its colleges as part of the admissions process.

### CUNY ACT Scoring

**Reading:** a scaled score of 65 or more.

**Writing Sample:** a total score of 7 or more.

**Mathematics:** scaled scores of 27 or more on each of the first 2 sections of the test: numerical skills/pre-algebra and algebra. Some colleges require students to achieve higher scores before they can register for credit-bearing mathematics courses.

### How Are CUNY/ACT Scores Used?

An associate must achieve a minimum score on CUNY/ACT for consideration in the Next Step Program at any CUNY college. Seniority is also a factor in determining who is given the opportunity to register for NEXT STEP in any enrollment period.

### Where Can I Get Help?

An ASSET Study Guide with sample questions from all four parts of the test is available on the ACT website: <http://www.act.org/asset/index.html>. An ACT study Guide with sample questions for all parts of the test is also available on the Act website: <http://www.act.org/asset/pdf/StudentGuide.pdf>. The same information appears in the Program's website <http://www.nspinfo.com/>

In addition, associates can prepare themselves by taking appropriate developmental courses in basic skills at local colleges using the Verizon Tuition Assistance Plan.

Various Home Study courses can help employees prepare in advance for entrance tests. These self-study courses are offered at no cost to employees and cover writing, reading, numerical reasoning, and elementary algebra. There are also study guides available at bookstores and public libraries for the ACT, a test that is similar to the ASSET entrance test used at non-CUNY Program colleges.

## Home Study Courses

### *Writing Skills: Practical English and the Command of Words*

This comprehensive course is designed to improve oral and written communication skills. All phases of language and effective communication are addressed in forty-eight brief lessons written in a style that quickly captures and holds the student's attention.

Among the topics included are:

- vocabulary development
- pronunciation
- writing
- diction
- grammar
- spelling
- punctuation
- usage

### *Numerical Reasoning: Real Life Math and the Power of Numbers*

This course consists of forty-eight interesting, to-the-point units that build mathematical skills in a concise, logical way. The program addresses problems the student has to deal with daily:

- basic math operations
- business math applications
- statistics
- financial applications
- consumer issues
- problem solving

### *Numerical Reasoning: Basic Math (Lessons 1, 2, 3, and 4)*

### *Elementary Algebra: Basic Math (Lessons 5 and 6)*

Certain elements of this course may be new to some employees. For others, it will serve as a refresher of math skills that have faded over time. The components of the course are:

- Lesson 1: Basic Arithmetic
- Lesson 2: Fundamental Fractions
- Lesson 3: Decimals
- Lesson 4: Exponents, Powers, and Roots

- Lesson 5: Introductory Algebra
- Lesson 6: Advanced Algebra

*Home Study Courses and NSP*

If an associate wants extra preparation, for the courses in the NEXT STEP curriculum in section 2.5, the following Home Study courses might help. They can be useful before or during Program participation.

| <u>NEXT STEP Course</u> | <u>Related Home Study Course</u>           |
|-------------------------|--|
| Computer Applications   | Computing Concepts for End-Users           |
| Technical Math I        | Basic Mathematics                          |
|                         | Real Life Math and the Power of Numbers    |
| English I               | Power Writing                              |
|                         | Practical English and the Command of Words |
|                         | Speed Learning                             |
| Electrical Circuits     | Basic Electricity                          |

Associates interested in any of the Home Study courses can call Verizon Home Study at CAEL 1-800-497-5465, Option #2. The associate should have the material within two weeks. If he or she plans to take a Home Study course, allow enough time to order the course and complete it. Some Home Study courses take only a few hours to finish, while others take much longer. The work is self-paced and completed on the associate's own time. There is no charge for Home Study courses.

Using an ACT Study Guide to Prepare for both types of entrance tests.

There are many books available at bookstores and libraries designed to help people prepare for the ACT, a test that is similar to the ASSET test used at Program non-CUNY colleges, but not quite the same. (Some four-year colleges and universities require the ACT for admission. The ACT covers English, Mathematics, Reading, and Science Reasoning.)

Associates who decide to use an ACT study guide to prepare for taking ASSET, should note the following similarities and differences:

- the English part of ACT is similar to the Writing Skills part of ASSET. Both measure understanding of correct use in grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, writing strategy and writing style.
- ASSET has two mathematics parts, Numerical Skills and Elementary Algebra. Numerical Skills tests the ability to perform basic math operations using whole numbers, decimals, and fractions. It also measures understanding of prime numbers, absolute values, scientific notation, and square roots. Elementary Algebra measures skills often taught in a first year high school algebra class, including evaluating and simplifying algebraic expressions, solving linear and quadratic equations, and performing operations and use polynomials. The ACT has a single mathematics section that goes beyond elementary algebra, and includes intermediate algebra, geometry, and trigonometry.
- the Reading parts of the ACT and the ASSET are similar. The ACT has more questions and covers four different kinds of reading material: prose fiction, humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences. Both tests measure the ability to find specific information in text, and to make logical inferences that extend beyond the text information.
- Science Reasoning, the fourth part of the ACT, is not a part of the ASSET nor needed for the Program.

A word of advice: Using an ACT study guide to prepare for the ASSET can be helpful, but it can also be confusing. While some parts of both tests are similar, some are not. The ACT mathematics, for example, covers more mathematics than that needed to take the ASSET.

By carefully examining the sample questions in the Numerical Skills and Elementary Algebra sections in the ASSET Study Guide, an associate will get an idea of the math covered in the ASSET. With this in mind, he or she can then go to any ACT study guide and review only the math topics found in the ASSET test.

## Appendix 1 Transfer of Credit, Colleges' Policies

### *Broome Community College Policy*

Non-transferable courses at Broome Community College include Computer applications, Technical Mathematics I, Social Science, and the four Telecommunications courses. Other technical courses such as Electrical Circuits, Electronics I, Electronics II, Digital Systems I, and Digital Systems II will in general not be waived, unless the student can clearly demonstrate that (s)he has fulfilled all of the course requirements.

### *Bronx Community College Policy*

The Verizon Telecommunication Program at Bronx Community College follows the Program transfer credit policy. It does not accept transfer credit for the following course:

- Math 10 (Math 1)
- ELC 13 (Computers applications)
- HIS 23 (Social Science)
- And any telecommunication course (TEC 11, TEC 21, TEC 31, TEC 41)

All other prior coursework will be reviewed and transferable credits will be accepted as appropriate.

### *Clinton Community College Policy*

Clinton Community College follows the transfer policies of the Next Step Program with the following additions. Decisions to transfer credits are at the discretion of the registrar with consultation with appropriate faculty when transfer credit is awarded for the following:

- Academic credits earned at a post-secondary institution that is authorized by a state Department of Education to grant an academic degree. Grades of "C" or better will be transferred to CCC. For grades less than C, see the policy on the "Transfer of D grades" below.

1. Credit earned through military service schools based upon the recommendation of the American Council on Education regarding collegiate level courses.
2. Credit earned through the United States American Forces Institute courses, based on the recommendation of the American Council on Education
3. Credit by examination through the College Level Examination Program (CLEP) when results meet the recommendation of the American Council on Education.

Transfer credits do not affect the quality point average earned at Clinton Community College. Only credit hours transfer, not grades or quality points do not.

#### Policy on Transfer of D grades

Clinton community college will accept for credit a maximum of three (3) courses (not more than 12 credit hours) for which a student had earned a "D" for transfer credit. The "D" grade course(s) from the transfer college must have been earned within five (5) years from the date of application for transfer of the "D" credit and either a or b below:

- a. The student has completed a minimum of twenty-four (24) credit hours of study elsewhere with a grade of C or better for at least twelve (12) of the twenty-four (24) hours; OR
- b. The student has satisfactorily completed one full semester at Clinton community College with a grade of C or better for at least twelve (12) credit hours of study.

#### *Dutchess Community College Policy*

We recognize the uniqueness of the Verizon Next Step Program and the course work within the Program. In theory, college level courses taken elsewhere are not the same as those courses offered within the Next Step Program. Yet we wish to be fair to those students who have completed course work at other institutions of higher education.

We use the following guidelines when accepting course work for transfer credit within the Next Step Program:

1. Only courses taken within a three-year period prior to entering the Next Step Program are considered for transfer credit.
2. To receive transfer credit for the Next Step English 1 course a student must have had formal course work in the following areas – composition, public

speaking and technical writing. All three are components of Next Step English 1 and are important to your success in subsequent courses within the Next Step Program.

3. To receive transfer credit for the Next Step English 2 course a student must have taken an English literature course that had the American dream, labor and/or technology as its primary focus.

Any student wishing to take a Proficiency Exam for courses older than the three-year limit may do so. Students must notify us of this intention and **MUST** take all desired proficiency exams within one year of entering the Program. Proficiency exams cannot be taken during a regularly scheduled class and must be done outside of your scheduled Next Step class day.

If a student is granted transfer credit

1. He/she will receive a copy of the Next Step audit policy.
2. He/she will discuss their responsibilities within the course they are auditing with their instructor.
3. He/she will register for the course. The change to audit status will occur during the 10th week of the semester. Students will receive a midterm grade. Students must have a grade of C or better at this time before a change to audit status will be granted.
4. The change to audit status will only occur if the student has followed the audit policy as outline by the Next Step Program and their instructor.

#### *Erie Community College Policy*

Students transferring to Erie Community College from other accredited institutions of higher education may receive whole or partial credit for courses taken at the other institutions. To arrange for the transfer of credits, the student must have an official transcript of his/her work as well as a catalog from the other institution sent to the Campus Admissions Office. Once the official transcript is received, the coordinator in the appropriate academic department will evaluate the transcript and supporting documents and decide on the acceptability of the transfer material and the amount of credit that will be transferred. No transfer credits will be computed in the cumulative quality point average, and no grade below a "C-" will be transferred.

*Hudson Valley Community College Policy*

Due to the specialized focus and unique mission of the Verizon Next Step Program, transfer credit will only be considered for English Composition I and II, Mathematical Applications II, and Physics.

*Mohawk Valley Community College Policy*

Mohawk Valley Community College follows the Next Step Program policy on awarding transfer credits.

*Nassau Community College Policy*

For S07, S08, and S09 Cohorts:

Nassau Community College will only consider transfer credits for NSP courses if the associated course(s) listed here have been completed at the college:

Telecomm Circuits (2nd semester) – both ELT 115 and ELT 116

English Composition I (2nd semester) – ENG 101

Technical Mathematics II (3rd semester) – Math 111 or higher

Electronics I (3rd semester) – ELT 113 within 5 years

Electronics II (4th semester) – ELT 213 within 5 years

Physics (4th semester) – both PHY 101 and PHY 102

Digital I (5th semester) – ELT 214 AND ELT 215 AND ELT 217, all within 5 years

Digital II (6th semester) – ELT 310 within 5 years

English Composition II (7th semester) – ENG 102

Courses taken from another college will be evaluated by the Admissions Office and the Engineering Department Chair.

For S10 cohorts and beyond:

Transfer credits for VERIZON Telecommunications program:

TNY Telecom circuits      NCC ELT112 and ELT115

Within a five year period

|                    |                       |                             |
|--------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| TNY Electronics I  | NCC ELT113 and ELT213 |                             |
| TNY Electronics II | NCC ELT330            |                             |
| TNY Digital I      | NCC CRT201            | Within a three years period |
| TNY Digital II     | NCC CRT202            |                             |

No change from existing transfer criteria for English, Math, and Physics.

Courses from other institutions will have to be evaluated by the department chair and/or faculty members assigned to the telecommunication program.

*New York City College of Technology Policy*

New York City College of Technology follows the Program transfer credit policy.

*New York Institute of Technology Policy*

New York Institute of Technology will consider prior coursework for transfer credit only for the following NSP courses:

Technical Mathematics II (3rd semester)

English Composition I (2nd semester)

English Composition II (7th semester)

Physics (4th semester)

*Onondaga Community College Policy*

All transfer credit will be awarded on an individual basis and is awarded by the Electrical Technology Department at Onondaga Community College. Consideration will be given to the accreditation of the institution at which the courses were taken, individual course content, and length of time spent in each lecture and lab.

*Queensborough Community College Policy*

Queensborough Community College will accept transfer credits toward the A.A.S. degree in Telecommunications Technology: Verizon with the exception of specific non-

transferable courses designated by the Verizon Next Step Program policy. Students who receive transfer credit will have the option to audit the class indicated or to return to work during the corresponding time the class meets, according to Program policy.

If students do wish to retake the course for credit and the course was originally taken at Queensborough, the students' grade-point average will be computed in either of two ways:

- 1) if students originally received a D or worse for the course, their new grade will be substituted for the old; or
- 2) if students received a C or better, the new grade will be averaged with the old grade. Stipulations 1 and 2 also apply to students who take non-transferable courses as part of the Program but who have previously been granted credit for the same courses at Queensborough: new grades will either be substituted or averaged as indicated above.

*Suffolk Community College Policy*

Suffolk CCs Transfer Credit Policy is outlined in the SCC catalog.

To summarize:

1. Request for credit by evaluation for previous course work (or for credit by examination) should be made through the Central Admissions Office (or through the NSP Program Coordinator). An official transcript from ALL prior academic institutions must be submitted.
2. Grades for prior course work accepted for transfer credit are not noted on the transcript, nor are they used in computing the cumulative average.
3. In addition to transfer credit for course work, portfolio assessment and independent learning may be used toward earning credit. (Students must take a Portfolio preparation course prior to this assessment method.)
4. Credit may be awarded for high school AP courses (equivalent to NSP courses) with a score of at least three on the AP exam.
5. Credit may be awarded for course work successfully completed with a grade of at least C- or better at another accredited institution for courses deemed equivalent.

6. Credit may be awarded by CLEP and RCE exams. If no exam is available for the particular course in question, a student may request to take a Challenge exam (these are not available for all courses).

7. Credit will be awarded for the equivalent NSP Telecommunications Technology courses offered through one of the participating colleges.

*SUNY Canton*

Canton's transfer policy is under review

*Westchester Community College Policy*

Westchester Community College will accept transfer credits for up to four courses. In the case of English 101 and English 102, if the student has previous credits from either WCC or another college for both courses, WCC will only accept the credits for one English course.

## Appendix 2 Attendance Colleges' Policies

### *Bronx CC*

Attendance at all classes is required. There are no provisions for unexcused absences or for unexcused free cuts. Instructors keep an official record of absences in their grade folders and communicate with the Office of the Registrar regarding excessive absences involving individual students.

In the event of an unavoidable absence, students are encouraged to immediately file evidence of reason for the absence so that it will be available if questions of appeals should arise. Evidence should be shown to all instructors involved and their signatures affixed as evidence of their having witnessed the documentation.

Students excessively absent as indicated in the Guide for Excessive Absences chart (page 8 of the online catalogue) may first be warned. If absences continue, they will be debarred, with an assigned grade of "WU" which is a failing grade.

### *Broome CC Attendance Regulations*

General Policy: Colleges throughout the nation have found that students who regularly attend classes have a better success record than students who do not regularly attend classes. With the intent of encouraging student success, BCC strongly urges students to regularly attend their classes. In fact, the College's policy is that a student is expected to come to all class sessions prepared to participate in an appropriate manner. Absence from class is considered a serious matter and never excuses a student from class work. A student must complete all assignments, examinations, and other requirements of any course, to receive credit.

Absence from class may also affect a student's academic standing and eligibility for financial aid if the student is administratively dropped for non-attendance (See Deregistration below).

The College understands, however, that students sometimes, due to uncontrollable circumstances, are absent from classes. In these cases, the students need to meet with their instructors to discuss missed work.

## Department Exceptions

Within the spirit and framework of the College policy, each department may develop its own guidelines to meet its needs. Such guidelines are subject to the approval of the Vice- President for Academic Affairs.

### *Clinton CC Attendance Requirement*

Regular attendance is considered essential for successful study and is expected at all lecture and laboratory periods for which the student is registered.

If, for some unavoidable reason, a student should miss a class, it is the student's responsibility to contact the instructor (s) as soon as possible to determine what measures can be taken to make up the missed work to maintain the continuity of the course. However, the instructor is not obligated to give make-up work, quizzes, examinations or extended due dates because of student absence.

If a student misses more than 15 percent of the classes, the student may be withdrawn from the course and receive a grade of WY (unofficial withdrawal). The decision to withdraw the student is at the discretion of the instructor.

### *Dutchess CC Absences and Tardiness*

Since excessive absences or tardiness may affect the quality of a student's academic performance, the College expects all students to attend classes regularly. Faculty members are free to determine their own policies regarding irregular class attendance.

Students must complete all assignments, examinations, and other requirements in all of their courses. Absence does not constitute exemption from such obligations, and it is the student's responsibility to take the initiative in making up any work missed.

Students must be aware, however, that the opportunity to make up an examination is not a student right, rather it is a privilege granted under special circumstances. Faculty members are free to determine their own policies regarding make-up examinations, except that examinations must be offered for absences due to religious observances, hazardous weather conditions, or due to verifiable medical reasons. In the event of

hazardous driving conditions due to inclement weather when the college remains open, students should make their own determination whether to attempt to travel to class based on safety considerations. Where appropriate, faculty will allow students who miss class under these conditions and opportunity to make up work missed. Excessive absences, however, may make it not appropriate to continue in the course. Students must be informed, in writing, at the beginning of each semester of the make-up examination policy for each course.

Students should be aware that non-attendance at classes will not result in automatic withdrawal from a course. Unless the student initiates a formal course withdrawal request through the Registrar's Office, non-attendance will result in an "F" grade.

*Erie CC Telecommunications Technology Program Attendance Policy*

The following is the Attendance Policy for all course outlines submitted to the ECC Curriculum Committee at the time of their acceptance:

Attendance: All students are expected to attend every session of each course for which they are registered. Students are responsible for all that transpires in class whether or not they are in attendance. Excessive absence or lateness may lead to failure in a course or removal from the class roster. Students must notify the instructor of any anticipated absences.

The following policies are listed in the Erie Community College Catalog:

Attendance Policy: Students are expected to attend class regularly in every course for which they have registered. Attendance regulations for specific courses are established by the course instructor, announced and distributed in writing at the beginning of the semester, and may have a bearing on the student's grade. Additional requirements are found in individual course syllabi. Students are obligated to contact their instructors if they are unable to attend class during the first week. Students not attending class during the first week may be dropped from class by the instructor.

Absences from Class: Students who anticipate an absence should contact the appropriate instructor(s) in advance. In the case of an unexpected absence, students

should speak to the instructor(s) as soon as they return to campus or during their absence. Of course, in either case, the anticipated or the unanticipated absence, the student is responsible for all material covered. As required by law, instructors are responsible for keeping accurate attendance records.

Erie CC also follows the policies listed in the NextStep Erie Program Guidelines.

Therefore, any NextStep student, who violates these policies, will be subject to review by the Telecommunication Technology program faculty and administration. Determination will then be made whether the student will receive a failure in the course or be considered for removal from the class roster. The recommended maximum "Excessive absence or lateness, will be twenty percent or as indicated by an instructor's individual course syllabi whichever is less."

#### *Hudson Valley CC Attendance Policy*

Excessive absence interferes with the successful completion of a course of study and diminishes the quality of group interaction in class. To encourage students to accept their obligation to attend class the following policy is established:

Class attendance is a matter between the instructor and the student. Instructors are obliged to announce and interpret specific attendance policies to their classes at the beginning of the part of term in the course syllabus.

Faculty is encouraged to be considerate of students with special circumstances.

#### *Mohawk Valley CC*

Attendance is expected at all sessions. Repeated absence may result in failing the course. During the first week of each term, the instructor will inform the students in writing of the attendance requirements with regard to activities, such as exams, quizzes, papers, tasks, projects, experiments, discussions, panels, reports, class participation, and other work associated with the course. State University of New York regulations require evidence of pursuit of prescribed course work. Students who fail to satisfy those regulations may be deleted from the class on the official census date.

*Nassau CC*

Students are expected to attend all classes. Absences due to illness or for other serious reasons may be excused by the instructor. Students are advised that absences in excess of 10% of the total class meetings may result in the student being dropped from the course. Some departments may have additional attendance guidelines and related grading policies. The instructor shall detail the specific attendance policy for his or her class. Students are responsible for all course work missed.

*New York City College of Technology*

Students are expected to attend each class meeting. They may be absent without penalty for no more than 10% of the class instructional hours in the semester. Unless a department has specified in writing a different attendance policy, including all courses with laboratory, clinical or field-work, this college policy shall govern as follows:

| <b>Class Meets</b> | <b>Allowable Absence</b> |
|--------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 time per week    | 2 absences per semester  |
| 2 time per week    | 3 absences per semester  |
| 3 time per week    | 4 absences per semester  |
| Etc.               |                          |

*New York Institute of Technology*

Students are expected to attend every class session. Instructors will inform students of the exact number of absences and late-arrivals permitted during the semester. Students who exceed these limits may be subject to failure. If a student misses any class or test, the instructor has the right to either grant or deny an opportunity to make up the work that was missed. In such cases, the instructor shall be the sole judge of the validity of a student's explanation for having missed the class or test.

*Onondaga CC*

Attendance Policy: Students are expected to attend class regularly in every course for which they are registered. Attendance regulations for specific courses are established by the course instructor, announced, and distributed in writing at the beginning of each

semester. Students are advised that absences in excess of ten percent of the total class meetings may result in the student being dropped from the course.

If a student is absent, it is the student's responsibility to contact the instructor(s) as soon as possible to determine what measures can be taken to make up the missed work. However, the instructor is not obligated to give make-up work, quizzes, examinations or extend due dates because of student absence.

### *Queensborough CC*

It is very important that students attend every scheduled class meeting of a course. Attendance is monitored from the first day a class is scheduled to begin. Absence from class can seriously reduce the student's chances of completing a course successfully. Generally, absences beyond 15 percent of course hours may result in a failure for a course. Lateness to class can be considered as an absence as well. Therefore, excessive lateness may also produce a failing grade. Students needing to miss class on certain days for religious observance are referred to the Student Regulations section of the catalog. Students are responsible for notifying their instructors in advance of an intended absence.

### *Suffolk County CC*

The college expects that each student will exercise personal responsibility with regard to class attendance. All students are expected to attend every class session of each course for which they are registered. Students are responsible for class whether or not they are in attendance. In the college catalog and Program Guidelines, the college defines excessive absence or lateness as more than the equivalent of one week of class meetings during the semester. Excessive absence or lateness may lead to failure in a course or removal from the class roster.

An instructor may remove a student from the class roster at any time when, in the judgment of the instructor, absences have been excessive.

### *SUNY Canton*

Students are expected to accept to full responsibility for meeting all of the academic requirements for every course in which they are enrolled. Attendance regulations are determined by the faculty of each department based upon their academic requirements for each curriculum/and or course. Each department will state clearly the attendance policy in writing to the student at the beginning of each semester. Therefore, AN UNEXCUSED ABSENCE FOR ANY REASON IS HANDLED BETWEEN THE STUDENT AND THE INSTRUCTOR. Unexcused absences may result in dismissal from the course. A grade of "F" will be recorded for a student dismissed unless the student makes formal application for withdrawal from the course prior to the semester deadline for withdrawing, consistent with the college withdrawal policy. Refer to the student catalogue for additional information.

### *Westchester CC*

It is strongly recommended that you not "cut" a class without legitimate reason. If you have to miss a class, take note of the number of absences you are allowed. Every absence has a negative impact on what you learn and what grade you will earn.

Being ill does not allow you more absences. If you are legitimately ill for three days or more, inform the Student Health Center.

You will not be penalized for being absent on religious holidays.

It is important to remember that you may be at risk of losing financial aid if you cut class excessively. If you have a problem, talk to the professor or an academic counselor. College is a big investment; do not throw away your money by cutting class!